

[From Winter 2005-2006]

## Waterfowl Week a Flying Success

From the weather to the birds, nature cooperated to put on a spectacular show of migration marvels for the Waterfowl Week celebration at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. The nine-day celebration featured special drives and waterfowl related programs. Over the four-day Thanksgiving weekend, approximately 900 vehicles took advantage of the fine weather to drive up the 7.5 mile Northern Service Road. They were greeted by thousands of snow geese along with other abundant waterfowl.

The visitors who flocked to the refuge were also treated to a variety of programs and demonstrations. Fitting to the celebration's theme, a "Feathered Whatsits" bird walk kicked off and closed the nine day event.

Demonstrations included bird banding by local birding expert, Richard Roberts, and decoy carving by renowned local carver, Reggie Birch. Wildlife art exhibits by painters Barbara Schmitz and Jenny Somers captured the beauty of nature on canvas. Joshua Taylor, Jr. of Archiphoto Workshops shared his nature photography tips and techniques through an auditorium program as well as a field session. Refuge staff offered an Island Nightlife walk to discover the natural wonders of the night. Marsh Marvels and Woodland Wonders guided visitors on an exploration of the freshwater marsh and the maritime forest. Visitors who were short on time could learn a lot about wildlife conservation in the 15 minute Back Deck program. Kids even joined in the fun by experiencing migration through a Natural Wonders program offered in the Noah Williams Classroom. Approximately 300 people attended the various programs. Visitor responses were enthusiastic and appreciative of all the various interpretive opportunities.

Be part of the fun at next year's event. Stay alert for information on Waterfowl Week 2006.

